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# Frequently Asked Questions

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## **Is the CPM program nationally recognized?**

The Certified Public Manager (CPM) Program is a nationally recognized professional development program for supervisors and managers in government. It is a training system that develops and measures competencies in the field of public management. The National Certified Public Manager Consortium monitors and accredits programs. Only accredited programs are authorized to award the CPM designation. Additional information about the National CPM Consortium can be found at the following website: [www.cpmconsortium.org](http://www.cpmconsortium.org).

## **What are the national certification requirements?**

### *Program Hours*

The program must be at least 300 hours of structured learning activities. Such learning activities may include but are not limited to application projects, structured readings, comprehensive examinations, and other approved workshops/courses.

### *Learning or Job-Related Projects*

There must be a requirement for a written demonstration of participants' effectiveness in applying core materials to their job environment.

### *Evaluation of Participants*

The program must provide substantive evaluation of all major curriculum objectives.

## **Does the South Carolina Certified Public Manager program meet national requirements?**

Each member of the National Certified Public Manager Consortium develops a CPM Program based on the unique needs of their participants. The flexibility offered by the Consortium allows our state to implement a CPM Program that targets the competencies needed to successfully manage in this state's environment. South Carolina's program was initially accredited by the National CPM Consortium in 1996 and reaccredited in 2006, 2011 and 2016.

Philosophically, the South Carolina CPM program strives to encourage innovative management practices and high ethical standards. The vision of the CPM Program is: **Certified Public Managers are recognized by South Carolina state government leaders as premier candidates for leadership positions.** The CPM Program uses a systematic "building-block" approach to ensure knowledge, retention and application. Program participants attend workshops and field activities, complete a variety of application activities and projects, and are tested on skills and knowledge learned. The CPM Program promotes on-the-job application of learning, gives participants new approaches to agency challenges and opportunities, awards participants a nationally recognized credential, and encourages networking with CPM graduates in South Carolina and other states.

**Is there a South Carolina Society for graduates of the Certified Public Manager Program?** The South Carolina Society for Certified Public Managers (SCSCPM) is a non-profit organization created by graduates of the CPM Program. The Society's objective is to further educational and developmental opportunities for CPM graduates. Information about the Society can be accessed at: [www.scscpm.org](http://www.scscpm.org). The state of South Carolina has a local Society chapter of the Certified Public Managers (CPM).

**Who is responsible for the direction of the SC CPM Program?** Overall administration and curriculum direction of the South Carolina CPM Program is provided by the South Carolina Department of Administration's Division of Program Management. The CPM Advisory Committee advises on policy, program content and agency need.

**Who should participate in the CPM program?** The CPM certification is designed for experienced state government career supervisors and managers who have demonstrated leadership potential to their agency's management. Since the agency funds the candidates' participation in the CPM program, selection decisions should be based on a combination of the candidates' demonstrated performance and potential, their level of interest and commitment to the CPM program, as well as the potential mutual benefits to the candidates and the agency.

**How do I get enrolled?** Agencies receive application information annually, and agencies submit candidate's applications to the Division of Program Management unit of State Training, where the applications are reviewed. The applicants are then notified and asked to sign a commitment to the 18-month program.

**How long does it take to complete the program?** Candidates participate in classes and developmental activities approximately two days a month over an 18-month period.

**What is the attendance policy?** Candidates must attend a required number of courses over an 18-month period. Additional time is needed to complete projects and assignments outside of class. Candidates must attend 90 percent of the sessions, to receive the CPM credential; however, all pre or post course assignments must be completed. Some classes missed the first year may be made up by attending another cohort group's classes the following year. Additional make-up activities will be scheduled as needed.

**How much does the CPM certification cost?** The program fee is \$2,150 and does not include two nights lodging fees for developmental retreats.

**Is there a final CPM exam?** There is one CPM exam which is a take home essay. Candidates take the CPM exam after completing the majority of the curriculum. Candidates are given three weeks to complete the exam. The CPM exam is evaluated on a "meets standard" and "does not meet standard" scale. No letter grades are given. Candidates are required to complete CPM exams individually and must not discuss questions or answers with others. If candidates violate this requirement by receiving or aiding in completing the exam, those candidates will be removed from the CPM program. Results are reported in writing to the candidate. Candidates will have two opportunities to meet passing criteria on the CPM exam. If after the second

opportunity a candidate's exam responses still do not meet passing criteria, that candidate will no longer be considered an active candidate and can reapply to the CPM Program no sooner than 12 months from the date of the candidate's last exam. If an individual is accepted as a candidate after reapplying to the program, the candidate must then satisfy designated CPM requirements, including coursework, as needed for developmental purposes.

**What about the CPM project?** To receive credit for the CPM Project, candidates must meet CPM Project success criteria. Candidates must also submit work by the deadline given by State Training for each segment of the project. If a candidate does not receive credit for their project, the candidate may submit another project. If a candidate does not receive credit after submitting a project the second time, then he or she will no longer be considered an active candidate.

**Are elective courses included in the program?** There are no elective courses. All courses and activities required to complete the CPM certification are now part of an inclusive curriculum, and candidates are expected to complete all program requirements.

**Under what conditions would a CPM Candidate be removed from the active program?** A candidate is considered is no longer considered active if one of the following occurs:

- The candidate or the candidate's agency requests that the candidate be withdrawn from the program.
- The candidate does not complete all the program requirements as described above.  
Note: In the event of extenuating circumstances and with approval of the CPM Program Manager, a candidate can finish the CPM Program with the next cohort group.